

SCOTTISH

ART



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GLASGOW ART GALLERY AND MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION

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COVER DESIGN: We have been surprised to learn from a number of people in Scotland that they have 'never seen' *The Scottish Art Review*. The cover has been designed to help them.

The SCOTTISH ART REVIEW

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EDITORIAL

RECENTLY, in his presidential address to the Scottish Federation of Museums and Art Galleries, Mr. Charles Carter, Director, Aberdeen Art Gallery said: 'Museums should be maintained as places where a man takes off his hat, but puts on his thinking cap.' Mr. Carter had previously pointed out that, substantially, galleries and museums have to make their appeal to an uninformed public, which, 'in so far as it has been educated, has been instructed to a rather drab level of uniformity'.

The general principles of education have been clearly defined by educationists. Galleries and museums have been slow to apply them, but changes in outlook and method are beginning to operate. Opposition within and without gallery and museum circles, generally disguised as 'certain qualifications' is becoming weaker, and evidence is accumulating in support of method in teaching appreciation of art. It has become clear that in art, as in life, we see only what we have learned to look for.

In Glasgow, the Schools Museum Service initiated in 1941 with the full co-operation of the Director of Education, has proved a case for large scale operations. Building restrictions, necessary as they may be, are the irksome hindrances in the way of creating the informed public of the future. Meanwhile there is always the plan of 'combined operations'. In other words, while we seek to serve an adult population it is not necessary to look upon the child as a thing apart. Further progress along general lines might be achieved if, instead of *sending* our young people to the Art Gallery, we decided to *bring* them. Recent experiences would seem to confirm that the judgments of the old may be refreshed by the imagination of the young.

In Trust for Scotland

THE National Trust for Scotland was formed in 1931 to preserve in perpetuity, for the benefit of the Scottish people, places of historic interest or natural beauty.

The need for such a body arose directly from the big changes that have affected Scottish life since the advent of the Industrial Revolution in the latter half of the eighteenth century. With this new era came a rapid increase in population over the whole of Scotland. On the one hand the countryside came to contain more people than it could support; while on the other hand the fast growing industrial areas of the Forth-Clyde belt became more and more greedy for workers; and the result was inevitable—a widespread drift of population from country to town. The effect of this was two-fold. Physically, the industrial areas became congested and sprawled shapelessly over many acres of mid-Scotland, while so restless was the age and so rapid the development that there was little time to consider questions of 'amenity' or the many things of value that were daily being swept away and lost for all time. Culturally, there came a dangerous break in the Scottish tradition—in architecture, design, and craftsmanship and in the popular appreciation of artistic integrity in such things: and we entered a bleak phase which indeed could hardly be avoided when so many thousands had been uprooted from their traditional way of life and had become wholly immersed in the struggle for existence.

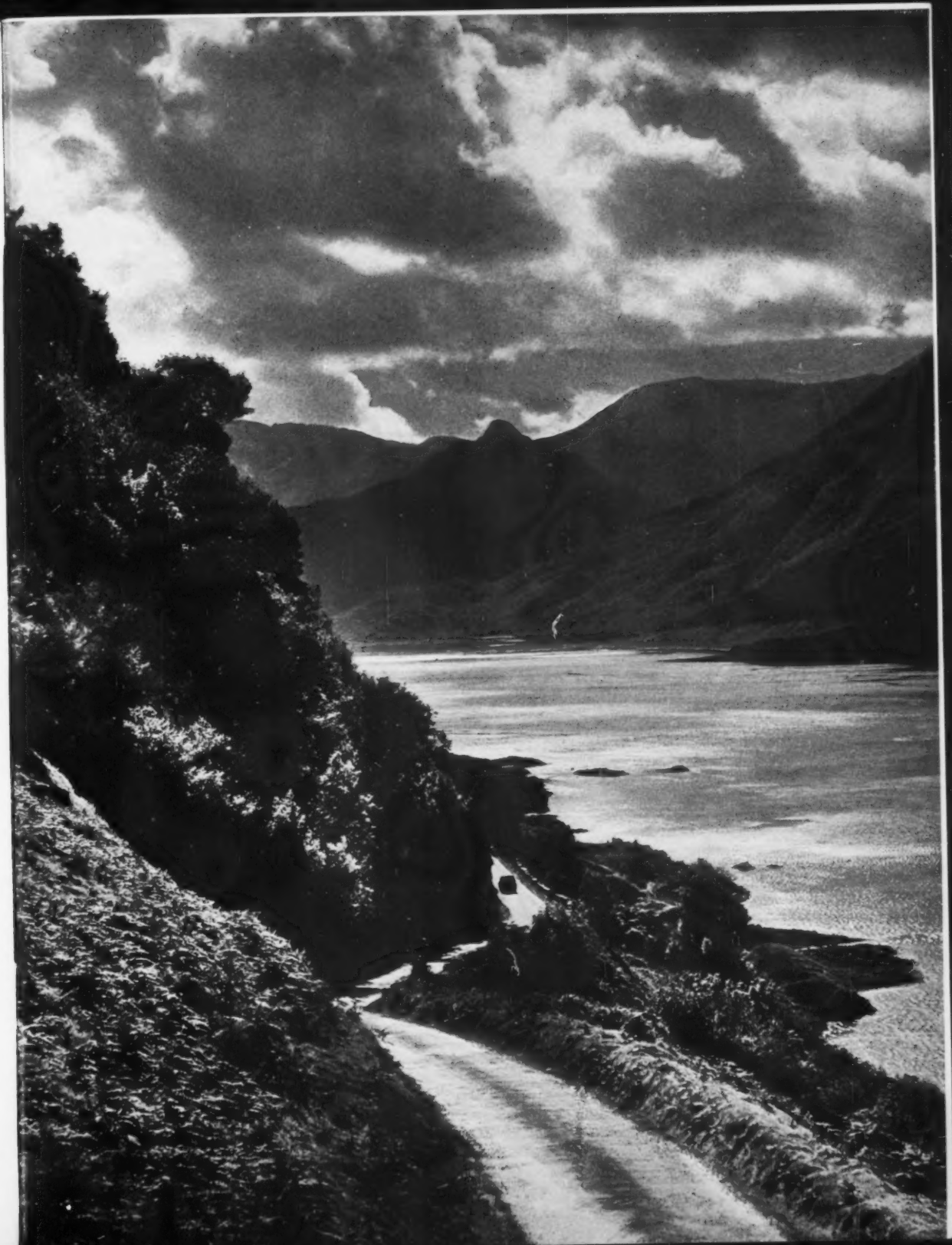
Inevitably reaction has come—almost too late. The industrial worker has instinctively begun to seek physical recreation and spiritual solace in the countryside that his forebears left a generation or two ago: and the countryside itself, drained of its young and active folk, has called loudly for remedial measures designed to restore its economy to wholesome life. Instinctively, too, the break in the Scottish tradition is being repaired and

a new affection has sprung up for the arts, the craftsmanship, the architecture, that are directly expressive of our way of life.

The National Trust for Scotland is an instrument in this wholesome revival and plays a very necessary part as a guardian of beautiful places and of our surviving heritage of architecture and history, ensuring that in this rapid reverse process, exploitation shall not deprive us of fine buildings and tracts of country and that, as it was recently expressed by the Secretary of the Trust, Mr. Jo Grimond, 'the old shall be integrated with the new'.

The Trust now holds in its safe keeping about fifty properties, widely varied and scattered throughout Scotland. It is clearly not possible, in brief space, to describe them all but they fall into groups according to their main characteristics.

And the first of these is Mountain Country. When Glencoe Estate was put on the market in 1935, the Trust stepped in and bought it. Seldom has any intervention by the Trust been so widely and warmly acclaimed. Later, in 1937, the neighbouring Estate of Dalness was acquired: and thus were secured from exploitation and for the benefit of the Scottish people, not only this grand and historic Glen itself but also its renowned and lofty sentinels from Bidean nam Bian to Buachaille Etive Mor. More recently the 15,000-acre Estate of Kintail was taken over. This fine stretch of country, situated at the head of Loch Duich in Wester Ross, includes Ben Attow and the Five Sisters of Kintail; while to the north-east is an adjoining property, the Falls of Glomach—one of the most impressive falls in Scotland, with a drop of over 350 feet. Balmacara Estate, also in Wester Ross, was bequeathed to the Trust a few years ago. It stretches from Loch Carron on the north, round by Plockton and Kyle to Loch Alsh, and comprises the most of the Kyle-Plockton peninsula, with the Village of Plockton itself,





PLOCKTON, LOCH CARRON, WESTER ROSS

most of Kyle and a number of crofting townships. It also includes Balmacara House with its gardens and policies. The Trust has devoted much time and thought to the development of Balmacara in the best interests of the local people. At present it is working in co-operation with other bodies to revive the crofting community and Balmacara House has been leased to the County Council to be used as a school for general education with a strong emphasis on the Highland way of life.

Next we have a group of properties in the Scottish architectural tradition. Chief among these is Culross, Fife, with its crow-stepped gables, red pantiled roofs and narrow causeways—a virtually intact and unique survival

of a typical seventeenth century Scottish burgh. The Palace and the Study are the larger and more important buildings but the smaller dwelling-houses also have an intrinsic value of their own and, in addition, provide good examples, now rarely to be found, of grouping, terracing and street architecture of that period. When the Trust took over its Culross property most of it was in a sad state of disrepair: under the expert guidance of the Ministry of Works, however, restoration soon began. So far, the Palace, the exterior of the Study and a number of the smaller houses have been restored and many features of interest have been revealed, such as the paintings on the wooden ceilings and walls of the Palace. But restoration, important though

it be, is only part of the story. The Trust also aims at rehabilitation, wishing to see these fine old buildings fulfilling their proper function in the community once more: and to some extent this end has been achieved, for already the dwelling houses which have been restored are being lived in by local people.

Provan Hall, near Glasgow, is one of the few remaining examples of a fifteenth century Scottish mansion-house, with its courtyard and arched gateway. Hamilton Dower House, Prestonpans, is a seventeenth century house built round three sides of a paved courtyard with a stair tower and finely decorated entrance door in one corner and a well, under a corbelled turret in the other. This charming house was derelict and under threat of demolition from a road-widening scheme when the Trust took it over and restored it for use as a private house. Gladstone's Land, a typical seventeenth century merchant's house in Edinburgh's Lawnmarket, was saved from a similar threat. It was condemned by the Local Authority as unfit even to be reconditioned for housing purposes. Now, after restoration for the Trust by Sir Frank Mears, it stands in great dignity, a national treasure, unique among Edinburgh buildings because of its arcading on the street level, and containing features of unusual interest such as its gay painted wooden ceilings and mural decorations both dating from 1620. It is also well-known as the headquarters of the Saltire Society, providing as it does a unique setting for their meetings, recitals and exhibitions.

Then there are the larger country houses like Culzean Castle, the Binns and Leith Hall. The first of these, Culzean Castle, the ancient home of the Kennedys, stands on a headland of the Ayrshire coast from which it commands one of the most beautiful



GLADSTONE'S LAND,
LAWNMARKET,
EDINBURGH



THE PALACE, CULROSS, FIFE

seascape views in Scotland. The present building was designed by Robert Adam whose interiors and furniture are exceptionally fine. The Binns, near Linlithgow, is the historic home of the Dalrymple of the Binns and contains many treasures. In the oldest part of the house, which dates from the early seventeenth century, there are well-moulded plaster ceilings typical of the period. Leith Hall, the home of the Chief of Clan Leith from 1650 to 1942 (when the male line became extinct) is situated at Kennethmont, Aberdeenshire. The house is built round a courtyard and although its four blocks have been erected at different periods between the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries, they are all in architectural harmony with each other and form a complete whole. One of the treasures of Leith Hall is a small writing desk bearing the handwriting of Prince Charles Edward and given by him to Andrew Hay of Rannes.

In contrast to these are the humble

houses associated with famous men—Souter Johnny's Cottage, Kirkoswald; Carlyle's House, Ecclefechan; Hugh Miller's Cottage, Cromarty; and Barrie's birthplace and



THE EAST WING DORMERS, THE PALACE, CULROSS



GLADSTONE'S LAND—CONCERT ROOM ON FIRST FLOOR

'theatre', Kirriemuir, the latter having been presented to the Trust by Mr. Elliot Alves whose timely intervention prevented their removal to America.

The Trust is also guardian of the Fields of Bannockburn and Culloden and of the Monument at Glenfinnan which marks the spot on which Prince Charles Edward's Standard was raised on 19th August, 1745. It has even undertaken the care of ruins such as Crookston Castle and Balmerino Abbey, but only to a limited extent for this highly specialised work is already carried out admirably by the Ministry of Works and therefore is not a primary concern of the Trust. And last, there is the Burg Farm in Mull, once bracken-ridden and derelict but now successfully reclaimed.

Too often is it assumed that the Trust exists solely to 'preserve'; and it cannot be over-emphasised that in fact its function is much more positive. If tracts of superb mountain country are held by the Trust, it is to make them available in their unspoilt state to as wide a public as possible, with all

that that implies in the way of providing facilities. If old buildings are saved from destruction, it is not to sterilise them behind railings but rather to restore the former beauty of their fabric for use and enjoyment to-day. If historic sites or the homes of famous Scotsmen are preserved, it is rather to refresh the public memory about their significance than to establish yet another profitable mecca for tourists. In short, the Trust seeks to cherish certain features of our heritage so that they may continue to give inspiration and pleasure for all time.

★

Just as this article goes to press, news has been received of the death of Sir Iain Colquhoun of Luss, who not only took an active part in the founding of the Trust but also served as its Chairman for fifteen years and subsequently as one of its Vice-Presidents.

The notable achievement of the Trust is, without question, largely due to Sir Iain's inspiration and constant personal guidance throughout his long term of office.

Sir David Wilkie

THE recent addition to the Glasgow Gallery of 'The Cottar's Saturday Night' by Sir David Wilkie has resulted in a fresh interest in the history of Scots Art and Artists. Mr. Ian Finlay's new book on *Art in Scotland* (reviewed in this issue) has had a similar effect. Arising out of this interest, and following a re-examination of the relevant literature (none of it recent), it has been suggested that a short account of the life and work of this distinguished Scot is appropriate to the occasion.

While it cannot be claimed for Wilkie that he was an originator of a new form in art, his influence on the art of Victorian England was profound. He popularised the picture which tells a story (defined as genre painting) and helped to create a new school of Art patron among the middle-classes. The works of the genre painters are actually the ancestors of what is still the most popular form of Art to-day, as evidenced by Christmas cards, calendars, etc. And it is this fact which led the late Roger Fry to say 'In this respect perhaps Wilkie is more responsible than anyone for much future disaster to our art.' Nevertheless, Fry continues: 'At the same time he was a genuine artist, and was rightly esteemed as such by those who understood that side of his work.'

David Wilkie was a son of the manse—his father was the Parish minister at Culter, where David was born in 1785. He was educated at the village school and very early showed an unusual talent for drawing. This he demonstrated in rapid sketches of his father's parishioners, while they enjoyed the repose incidental to the sermons. Unlike most of his contemporaries the lad was encouraged to develop his gift, and with full parental approval and help he entered the Trustees' Academy in Edinburgh at the age of fourteen. John Graham was his principal instructor, and the foundation of his future work was well and truly laid under the guidance of the best teacher of the



SIR DAVID WILKIE, R.A., H.R.S.A.

THE LETTER OF INTRODUCTION
Oil on canvas, 24 x 20 ins.



SIR DAVID WILKIE, R.A., H.R.S.A.

THE COTTAR'S SATURDAY NIGHT
Oil on panel, 33 x 42½ ins.

period. At the age of eighteen Wilkie won a prize of ten guineas for a picture on a classical theme, and was able to collect further sums through small portrait commissions. Sustained by a high self-confidence and with £70 in his pocket, he later ventured to London and the Academy schools there. Within a year of his arrival, when he was twenty-one, his painting 'Village Politicians' was hung in the Royal Academy and with it his name was made. These were the days of precocious successes—Lawrence and Morland were both infant prodigies—the latter had a picture in the Academy when he was ten.

Wilkie's success was immediate. Although Hogarth (1697-1764) and Morland (1763-1804)—the first as the originator of English realism, the second as its most notable exponent—had preceded him, the Scots artist's special contribution was along the line of depicting domestic incidents. There was no satirical comment, and the sentiment was never false in the literary sense. Further-

more, Wilkie owed nothing to either of them in the matter of technique. His earliest influences came from the Dutch Masters. He studied them with great persistence, but it may be said that he did so more with a view to making use of them rather than to enrich his own vision. Teniers and Ostade were his first heroes (Wilkie has been described as 'the Scottish Teniers') but in his best works he gives an honourable salute to Rembrandt. It is almost entirely on the technical side of his painting that Wilkie has to be linked with the Dutch. Problems of light and shade (*chiaroscuro*) are handled on traditional lines, but in conception, and frequently in design, there is manifestly an originality which has too often been overlooked. If Wilkie had been less anxious to please his public in the early days of his successful career, it is more than likely that his influence would have been as worthy as that of the great artists from whom he derived his finest technical qualities. Within five years of his first Academy



SIR DAVID WILKIE, R.A., H.R.S.A.

CARDINALS, PRIESTS AND ROMAN CITIZENS WASHING THE PILGRIMS' FEET
Oil on canvas, 19½ x 29 ins.

exhibit he was a full R.A. He succeeded Raeburn as King's Limner for Scotland and after Sir Thomas Lawrence's death he became Painter-in-Ordinary to George IV. He was knighted in 1836.

His first visit abroad was to Paris in 1814. Two years later he was in Holland, but neither of these visits appeared to result in any special change in style. The Dutch painters were well represented in London, and he had already studied them closely. In 1825 he was ordered South to recuperate from a severe illness and when he returned it was obvious from the work he attempted to produce that his ideas in technique and subject had undergone a complete change.

Perhaps he did come back with ideas beyond his capacity, thus leading Ruskin to say 'Poor Wilkie needs must travel to see the Grand School, and imitate the Grand School, and ruin himself.' Certainly, in his attempt to paint larger scale pictures of more important subjects he used methods which have not withstood the effects of time. The cracks and wrinkles which have appeared in his later painting are similar to those which

have afflicted the work of many of his contemporaries, notably Raeburn. It is likely that all of them succumbed to the persuasiveness of some artist 'tipster' who had discovered a new method of quick execution, especially for the deep shadows.

The visits abroad seemed to have created a form of restlessness which may also have indicated a growing self criticism. At any rate, in 1840, notwithstanding a long list of commissions, he decided to visit the Holy Land. He died on the return journey, when the ship was nearing Gibraltar, and on June 1st, 1841, he was buried at sea. The incident has been recorded by Turner in his painting 'Burial of Sir David Wilkie'.

In attempting to assess Wilkie's contribution to the development of British Art—and it was an important contribution—it is necessary to take a bird's-eye view of Art in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It has become customary rather to despise the minor painters who had visualised a market for literal and sentimental realism. If their reputations as significant artists have not survived, it is foolish to ignore the fact

that they were surpassingly popular in their time. It is equally foolish to fail to examine the reasons for this popularity, and, as has been pointed out, to note that the popular art then established has remained substantially unshaken to this day.

I can only direct you, with a few comments, towards a fascinating study of the influence of contemporary literature on the pictorial arts round about 1800. Wilkie was eleven years old when Robert Burns died, and he lived throughout the period which was enlivened by Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832). The 'domestic Painters', of whom Wilkie was the greatest, had, to quote Sir James Caw, 'entered into the heritage of the vernacular school of poetry, into its realism, and particularly into that phase of it which dealt with the humour, but always avoiding the grosser elements, which make *The Merry Muses* treasure trove to the connoisseur in the nasty.' The casual critic will immediately be led to the devastating retort: 'that proves they were merely illustrators!' But Wilkie, in his best work, created out of his own experience his pictorial theme, which he coloured with his own imagination. As a student he was forced by the formula of the school to devote his time and thought to the classical subject. When he became a free agent he brought something fresh and original into an already established mode and he lost some of



SIR DAVID WILKIE, R.A., H.R.S.A. A GREENWICH PENSIONER
Drawing, 13 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ ins.

his greatest qualities when he again took his subject matter from historical sources. That there is a documentary value in his simple domestic paintings is quite clear. The impor-

tance of this to-day cannot, in my judgment, be ignored, because there is some evidence of a revival of interest in this very aspect of painting among the best of our younger artists. Even if Wilkie did stress the story-telling idea of his pictures and sacrificed rather too much to make the



SIR DAVID WILKIE, R.A., H.R.S.A.

PITLIESIE FAIR
Oil on canvas, 23 x 42 ins.

point of his anecdote clear, his sense of design nearly always resulted in excellent grouping of his figures. And he was a very fine draughtsman.

It is perhaps fruitless to speculate on what Wilkie might have done if he had lived ten years longer. Delacroix, influenced by Constable and stimulated by the works of Byron (cf. Wilkie and Burns), was the first of the Romanticists who made the beginning of a wonderful century of French Painting. Wilkie had met Delacroix in Paris and the French Artist was greatly impressed by the Scot's reaction to what he had observed during a seven months' stay in Spain.

'He seemed to me,' says Delacroix, 'entirely unsettled by the Paintings he had seen. I wondered if a man so true a genius . . . could be thus influenced by works so different from his own.'

References made to Wilkie and his work in diaries and memoirs published within the last thirty years lend support to the plea for a new monograph. The Editor of the *Burlington Magazine* (August, 1948) deplores the fact that 'In spite of the ceaseless flood of art books, no British firm has succeeded in planning and placing in a market a series of well-documented, profusely illustrated, reasonably priced, and attractive monographs on

painters and sculptors who in the past have been undeservedly neglected.' A re-interpretation of Wilkie in the light of present-day educational tendencies would be most valuable.

There is little doubt that considerable research is a necessary preliminary to any authoritative work. The three-volume life by Allan Cunningham (published 1843) was followed by several short memoirs. In Lord Sutherland Gower's book published in 1902, 'The Cottar's Saturday Night,' gifted to Glasgow by the Hamilton Trust, is recorded among pictures which cannot be traced. Thanks to Mr. Hugh Agnew and Mr. Malcolm Stearns (U.S.A.) the history of the painting since it was first exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1837 has been completed. It was commissioned by Sir F. G. Moon, Bart., a well-known publisher of engravings, etc., and from then on it had several owners until it reached a Scottish Collection at the beginning of this century.

Mr. Malcolm Stearns when serving in the U.S. Navy during the recent war visited Glasgow, and informed us of his great interest in Wilkie's work. We were then engaged in copying a number of holograph letters by Wilkie which had been made available by their owner, Mr. John Cowie of Glasgow.

About fifty of these letters are quoted in Cunningham's life. Mr. Stearns observes, 'The acquisition by Glasgow of "The Cottar's Saturday Night" is exciting to say the least.'

It is perhaps a matter of regret that so many of Wilkie's finest or more famous works are outwith Scotland. Nevertheless, the interested should make a point of seeing those in the Scottish National Gallery (41 works in all). In the National Portrait Gallery there are eleven examples of portraiture. Dundee Gallery has four notable sketches for well-known paintings, e.g. 'The Rabbit on the Wall' and 'The Village Politicians', while Perth possesses an original study for 'The Blind Fiddler', and Aberdeen has a 'Portrait of the Duke of Wellington'.



SIR DAVID WILKIE, R.A., H.R.S.A.

THE LOST RECEIPT
Drypoint

Aesthetic Exercise—III

When the Van Gogh Exhibition was on view in the Glasgow Art Gallery we were greatly honoured by a visit from Mr. and Mrs. V. W. van Gogh. It was a valuable and stimulating experience to go round the exhibition with Ir. V. W. van Gogh, son of Theo, Vincent's faithful brother. We eventually persuaded him to put in writing his point of view on the relationship between the artist and the spectator. The following article is No. 3 in this series. It is related to one picture, but the argument, we think, can be universally applied.

WHEN visiting an art gallery what benefit or pleasure may be derived from looking at the paintings? To formulate an answer the first step will be to fix what a painting shows or tells in a direct way. After that we may try to penetrate deeper into the sphere of our emotions.

As an example we will take the famous painting by Vincent van Gogh entitled 'The Potato Eaters', which was included in the exhibition at the Glasgow Art Gallery in March 1948. It is the most important work of Vincent's early period. As the reproduction shows, it represents a peasant family at their simple dinner. The light from the lamp shines over the faces and over the table, with reflections on the walls and the ceiling, the whole conveying the intimate atmosphere inherent in the scene. The reactions of people looking at this painting for the first time are varied. Many come under the spell of its grandeur and like it, but quite a number begin by showing a great dislike. Some express the view that the painting is dark and depressing, without any beauty, etc., and certainly not productive of any pleasant sensations. When urged to be more precise, they inform us that they dislike the ugly faces which certainly have been distorted by the artist. And thus the picture stands condemned—by them.

Of course, everybody is free to dislike whatever he wants to dislike, but this has only partly to do with the artistic value of the painting or the emotions it may arouse. It is

known that in the ugliness of the faces 'The Potato Eaters' is quite a 'naturalistic' painting, for the figures of the peasants are a true representation of reality. The models were known in the village for the curious profiles of their faces. Vincent selected these models for two reasons. They suited him for his purpose, for the expression of his ideas (we will see further on what these were). Besides, he could not get any other models in the small village where he lived (Nuenen, a few miles from the town of Eindhoven).

The further reactions of certain unsympathetic spectators may be summarised thus. 'These peasants do not conform to my idea of the jolly and carefree people I have seen in that part of Holland. Anyhow, I don't like pictures of peasants.' Others seem to see in the painting an attempt by the artist to depict the dismal social conditions of the poor in order to convince the onlooker of the urgent need for improvements. For myself, I think it not unlikely that Vincent may be expressing an appreciation of home-life and an acute longing to possess a home and a family of his own.

The potato eaters are shown at one of the most pleasant moments of daily life, the time of the evening meal. The day's labour is finished. One can relax. It is a quiet moment in congenial surroundings. One satisfies the claims of hunger. It is a time of spiritual and material satisfaction. This 'wealth' is something experienced by rich and poor alike. In my early youth the painting hung on the mantelpiece in my mother's living room (the living room in a Dutch house also serves as the dining room). When I looked at the painting this always was and still is for me one of its main aspects.

Now, let us see what Vincent himself has to say. There is an extensive correspondence between him and his brother, Theo, who alone believed in him and who supported him all his life. Vincent's intimate thoughts are ex-



VINCENT VAN GOGH

THE POTATO EATERS
Oil on canvas, 32 × 45 ins.

pressed in these letters. He writes in the early spring of 1885 as follows:¹

'I have the intention to begin this week on those peasants around a dish of potatoes in the evenings. . . . I am going to start on studies for the different figures.'

In the next letter Vincent writes, not referring to 'The Potato Eaters' directly, but important for this article:

'From the point where I am now I see the possibility of rendering an emotional impression of what I see. Not always literally exact, or better: never exact for one sees nature through one's own temperament.'

Somewhat later he writes:

'the Potato Eaters are progressing and I think I will put therein something quite different from what you ever witnessed done by me, at least not so clearly. I am meaning life itself. That I am painting from memory. You know how many times I have painted the faces. And furthermore I am walking there every evening to make a drawing of some detail

¹As the originals are in the Dutch language a somewhat free translation is given. Care is taken, however, to ensure that the meaning is not distorted.

on the spot. However, in the painting I am letting my head work in the sense of idea or imagination, (a procedure) which is different from making studies, where no procedure of creation is allowed but where one takes in the reality as nourishment for one's imagination, to get the image clear.'

The studies Vincent refers to are more than fifty portraits he painted of the models for 'The Potato Eaters'. Then Vincent writes Theo on April 30th, 1885, to congratulate him on his birthday, which was the day following:

' . . . I would have liked to send you the picture of the "Potato Eaters" for this day, but though it progresses well it is not quite finished yet. Though I will have painted it in a relatively short time, and mainly from memory, it took a whole winter of studies of faces and hands. . . . I wanted one to get the idea that the fellows who are eating their potatoes under the lamp have been working the soil with the same hands they are putting into the dish, and it (the painting) therefore speaks of labour and of the fact that they have earned their meal so honestly. . . . And it would come out (later) that it is a real peasants' painting. I know it is. But whoever prefers to see the peasants sweetly, let him do it. . . . One would be in the wrong giving a peasants' painting a conventional smoothness. . . . When a peasants' painting smells of bacon, smoke,

potato vapour, all right; that is not unhealthy . . . but a peasant painting should not smell of perfume . . . one should paint the peasants as being one of them, feeling, thinking as they do.'

Some people may discover these ideas when looking at the painting without knowing anything of the artist's intentions. Others can only judge whether he has succeeded or failed in communicating his thoughts and purpose.

That leaves, however, two problems unsolved. In the quotations which are complete, there is no mention of dismal social conditions, nor of the happiness of family life. Perhaps others will find still other features which are not mentioned in Vincent's letters. How can that be explained?

A work of art is the expression of the whole personality of the artist; it is a reflection of his conscious being as well as of his subconscious feelings. One of the characteristics of Vincent van Gogh was his strong social feeling. We know this from his work as well as from his letters. Therefore, it is not to be wondered if it is reflected in his painting without him mentioning the dismal conditions of these poor peasants in his letters. It depends solely on the attitude of the spectator if he observes this. Usually the people who do so belong to a group that can be called socially progressive.

In depicting the 'good' side of family life the situation is similar only in so far that it also has been done subconsciously. In the first place the 'good' side is shown and not the 'bad' one of dismal conditions. Furthermore, there is the longing for his own well-being as well as the improvement in the condition of others.

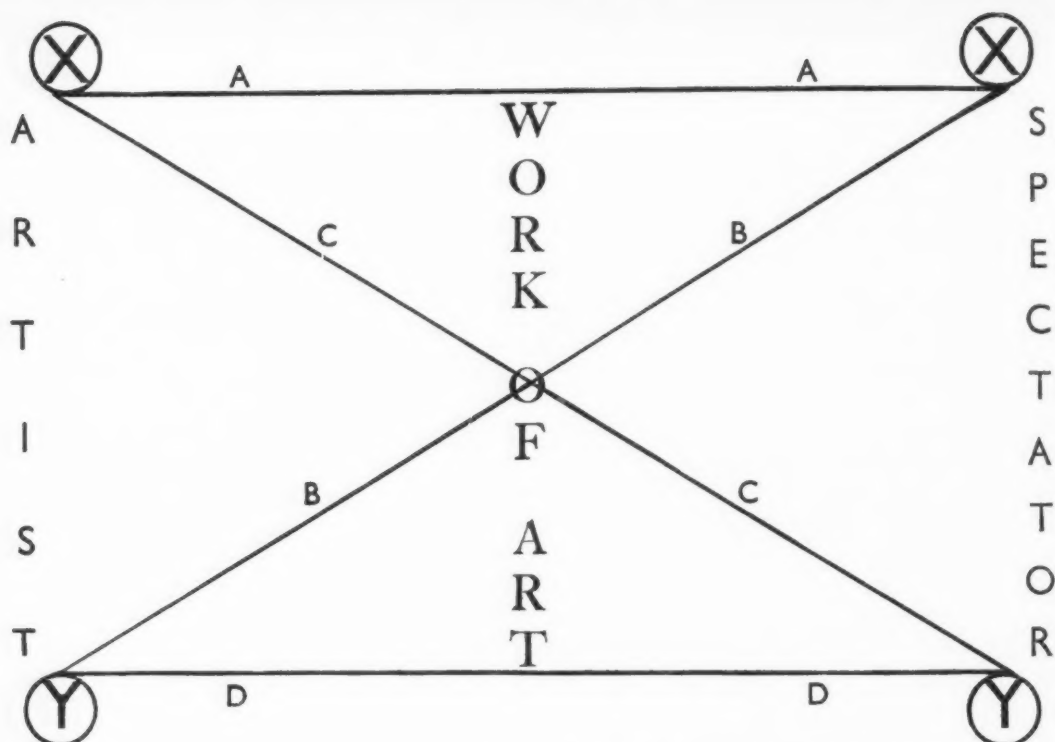
Vincent knew home life and its pleasures in his youth, when living in small villages. Sentiments of one's early life always retain a certain influence. From other paintings and from his letters we know that he always had a strong desire to possess a home and family of his own. This had always been denied to him, a fact which only tended to make the longing stronger and stronger as time went on. Nothing is ever as beautiful as when one has a strong wish for it or when one is dreaming of it. When dreams come true the reality is usually never free from some measure of

deception. So it is to be expected that Vincent, strongly influenced by his desire, had a beautiful image of home life in his mind. No wonder, therefore, that he put some of it into his painting without mentioning it specially. The quotations from his letters show a pre-occupation with the peasant as a labourer. Besides, it is not strange if his imagination in this respect manifested itself in 'The Potato Eaters'. He began his painting shortly after the death of his father, when the breaking up of the parental home was imminent. Though his relations with his parents left much to be desired at that period, in contrast with his younger years when he adored his father, he may have felt that he was going to lose the little that was left of the ideals of his boyhood. And he may have realised the very small chance he had of ever regaining a home of his own, in view of the experiences he had passed through.

So this painting speaks of a number of things: peasant life, labour, poverty, ugliness, family life, etc. There is also the technique used by the artist: the composition, the colouring, the lines, etc. which may be of more interest to the professional painter than to the layman. It will depend on the approach of the spectator which feature appeals to him and to what degree.

It is the privilege of the artist to create within us associations of thoughts and feelings which come to the fore when looking at his work. There is also the appeal to our subconscious feelings; to bring our slumbering emotions to consciousness. That means that the artist aids us in getting rid of internal tensions and barriers which exist within everybody because the subconscious feelings generally may not be in absolute harmony with each other. However slight the influence of looking at a single work of art may be, in the long run it is one of the means of achieving a greater freedom of mind and activity, and an enrichment of life.

In a general way the above considerations may be expressed in the diagram reproduced herewith. The left hand side denotes the artist, the right hand the spectator. The upper small circles (x) represent the conscious part of each one's personality, the



lower circles (y) the subconscious part. The four lines, *AA*, *BB*, *CC* and *DD* represent the four relations that are possible.

The line *AA* indicates what the painter painted consciously, and what the spectator observes consciously. In the case of 'The Potato Eaters' this is the scene of the five peasants around the table, with all the details. Some modern painters care little for 'illustration content' and do not use it as an appeal to the spectator. Included in the line *AA* is—for the spectators who discover it—any objective idea the painter wants to convey, e.g. Vincent's idea of the peasants eating with the same hands as worked the soil, etc.

The line *BB* refers to what the painter put in subconsciously, but consciously apprehended by the spectator. For some this was (in 'The Potato Eaters') the wish for social improvements; for others the longing for family life.

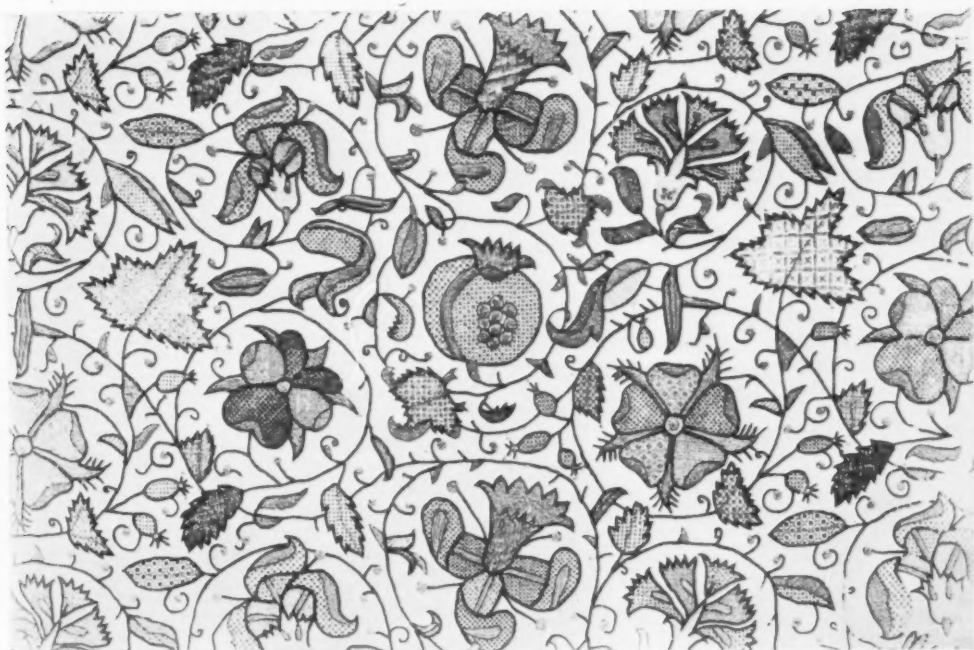
The line *CC* is what the painter put down consciously, without it being perceived by the spectator; it might however appeal to his sub-

consciousness. This applies for instance to the spectator not observing on his own initiative Vincent's ideas on the peasants and their labour, but nevertheless sensing something of it subconsciously. Another person might note it from his behaviour or from his talk.

The line *DD* relates to the subconscious parts of both artist and spectator. By definition, neither is aware of its existence, but a third person might find out. He might witness, for instance, that the wish for improvement in the conditions of poverty, painted by Vincent subconsciously, has had an effect on the subconscious mind of the spectator, shown perhaps in speech (from which could be derived that, subconsciously, he feels that something should be done about it).

Far from having exhausted the subject I end by expressing the hope that spectators will try more and more to realise the significance of their feelings when looking at paintings. After all, the artist painted his picture not knowing what your reaction will be. It is up to you to come to an understanding of the emotions it evokes in you.

A Panel of Black-Work Embroidery



THE Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh, possesses a notable example (here illustrated) of an interesting type of secular embroidery which was fashionable in England from the time of Henry VIII to that of Charles I.

Various known as Spanish or black-work, this class of embroidery was formerly believed to have been introduced into England by Katherine of Aragon. References in wills of the fifteenth century, however, would rather suggest that it was being produced in that country well before her arrival there in 1501.

The design of the earlier examples, such as that under review, which can be dated to the time of Elizabeth, consists of continuous curving, and rather slender stems bearing semi-conventional flowers and fruit. The work is carried out in black silk, either alone or, as here, combined with gold thread, on a ground of fine white linen. The main stem is gener-

ally worked in some kind of knotted or plaited stitch and is thicker than that used for other parts of the pattern.

Here a centrally-placed pomegranate surrounds a typical scrolling pattern of roses, carnations, daffodils, and pansies. The pomegranate formed the armorial bearings of the Moorish Kings and was later adopted as the badge of the Spanish Royal Family. This device was prominently displayed in the pageants held in connection with the marriage of Arthur, Prince of Wales (the elder brother of Henry VIII) with Katherine of Aragon, and later it was adopted as a party badge when the question of Henry's divorce was being debated. The leaves and petals of the flowers are filled with a minute patterning of floral and geometrical diapers which gives a wonderfully rich and almost exotic quality to the work.

From Henry VIII's reign onwards inven-

tories contain innumerable entries of Spanish or black-work. That of Katherine's wardrobe effects at Baynard's Castle includes a 'paire of shetys of fyne Hollande clothe, wrought with Spanyshe worke of blacke silke upon the edgies.'

That this class of embroidery was much used for various articles of costume is shown not only by the fairly large number of tunics, shirts, and caps which have survived, but by many portraits in which these articles are faithfully depicted. A well-known portrait of Henry VIII shows him wearing a black-embroidered shirt of the kind which Lady Russell is recorded as having given him on New Year's day, 1532.

The design of the Royal Scottish Museum panel would seem to be of too bold a character to have formed part of an article of apparel. Its size (30 x 20 inches) suggests that it might be a pillow cover or 'pillow-bere', to give it its contemporary name.

There seems little doubt that the floral designs found in the embroideries of the second half of the sixteenth century were copied or adapted from the Herbals such as those of Lyle and Gerard.

The illustrations contained in these works not only bear considerable resemblance to many of the embroidered designs, but the same flowers continually occur and the similarity shown in their treatment suggests a common origin and a readily accessible source such as would be provided by the Herbals. Moreover, the preference evinced for designs in black outline with diaper pattern fillings suggests that they are derived from the wood cuts and engravings with which such books were illustrated.

Definite evidence that such is indeed the case is afforded by a black-work tunic in the Victoria and Albert Museum which formerly belonged to Queen Elizabeth. This is embroidered in black silk thread with an all-over coiling tendril pattern with conventionalised flowers and fruit. The leaves enclose a variety of emblematical subjects of which three at least have obviously been taken from Geoffrey Whitney's 'Choice of Emblems and other Devises' printed at Leyden in 1586.

A Master Identified?

ONE of the curious features of masterpieces is that, as they get older, they free themselves increasingly of their human origins. At one time, for instance, it may have been all-important to know who painted the panel in Glasgow Art Gallery now attributed to the Master of Moulins, and to be sure of the identity of the two figures in it now named St. Victor and a donor. But to-day, some 450 years after it came into existence, the 'St. Victor' can, in effect, stand on its own. Its fresh, almost transparent colour, its truthful drawing, and its deceitful simplicity of composition no longer need the backing of mundane details of authorship, any more than it really matters now whether the writer of the *Odyssey* was a man or a woman or a co-operative society.

Yet this is not to say that new light shed on famous works can be without significance, for great pictures are history as well as art. From the art historian's point of view, therefore, two recent articles in the *Connoisseur* (June, September, 1948) in which Dr. Maurice H. Goldblatt put forward his reasons for assigning the 'St. Victor', and many other works labelled 'Maître de Moulins', to Jean Clouet the Elder are of decided interest.

Dr. Goldblatt founds his belief on the discovery, on the grisaille outer case of the Moulins Cathedral triptych from which the Master takes his name, of a signature hitherto overlooked. This reads J. HAY, and there is a dot in the apex of the A which Dr. Goldblatt ingeniously interprets as a nailhead, the whole representing a pictorial anagram in French—J. CLOU-HAY (Clouet). The name Jean Hay is already identified in contemporary literature, as is that of Jean (Hay) Clouet, who was the first of four generations of court painters to the Kings of France.

It is certainly a pleasing theory even if Dr. Goldblatt does, as it seems to me, weaken it slightly by claiming what is pretty clearly a punctuation mark after the J as another 'nailhead' in order to suggest the existence of

a subsidiary anagram reading 'J. HAY CLOU-HAY'. Also, the signature, which was so faint that it had to be reinforced with ink before it could be photographed, does not, of course, cover much space on the five-foot-high panel. The 'nail-heads' are at least conceivably just dots. Even if they were, however, the discovery of the signature as it stands is a considerable achievement.

At this date certainty is too much to hope for, and some of the 'Maître de Moulins' works, as reproduced to illustrate the new attribution, would seem to accentuate the alternative possibility of a school of painters rather than a single hand. There is, however, one centrepiece—'Nativity with Cardinal Rolin', now in Autun Museum—so apparently close in feeling (and in dimension) to the 'St. Victor' that one could almost credit the latter with being the 'Nativity's' right wing; though it may be remarked that the fillets worn by the Saint and his companion are a style of headgear not repeated in any other work now attributed to J. H. Clouet.

Dr. Goldblatt aptly quotes Glasgow Art Gallery's 'Masterpiece Series, No. 2' in discussing his theory. This useful pamphlet on the 'St. Victor' also draws attention to the McLellan Bequest's regrettable lack of records. Surely no collection of equal importance in the country can have been so ill-served in documentation. The difficulties of tracing the sources of the famous coachbuilder's acquisitions, first noted by James Paton, Galleries Superintendent in 1882, have not lessened with time. From Glasgow Corporation records, contemporary newspaper files, lawyer's vaults, and McLellan's own will nothing emerges beyond the fact that he bought one unnamed picture from Princess Lucien Bonaparte

(per 'Messrs. Smith') for £1000. Could this have been the 'St. Victor'? Until McLellan's private papers, if they still exist, are discovered, we are unlikely to find out.

What makes this absence of information all the more tantalising in the case of the 'St. Victor' is the fact that, from the condition of the picture, we may be certain that it has had no very chequered career. Its state of preservation, which is excellent, suggests that it may have reached McLellan direct from some reputable Continental collection. If the details of this single transaction could be only discovered, a great deal more of the picture's history might well be revealed without much difficulty.



MAÎTRE DE MOULINS

ST. VICTOR AND A DONOR
Oil on panel, 22 x 18½ ins.

Children in Art

EVEN the most casual visitor to an art gallery is able to recognise that pictorial art is a continuing dynamic process; that ideas, themes, forms and techniques are constantly changing. Indeed, the element of confusion appears to be so great that the effort to reach the stage of easy familiarity with the best of a large number of pictures is frequently abandoned.

Without attempting to put it on a high level in the list of aids to art appreciation we suggest that an examination of the differences in treatment of a particular subject by schools of painting, or by individual artists, is likely to be fruitful. For example, when students are directed to note the variations in the treatment of trees in landscape painting, they find for themselves other points for comparison, all leading towards a fuller understanding of the meaning of art.

A brilliant, well-documented article in the



FRANS HALS

HEAD OF A BOY
Oil on panel, 11 ins. diameter

JAMES COWIE, R.S.A.

THE STRIPED BACKGROUND
Watercolour, 15½ × 7 ins.

Art News Annual, which comes to us from the U.S.A., deals most comprehensively with the changing attitudes of civilisation towards the child. It has led us to re-examine some of the portraits of children in our own collection.

The 'Portrait of the Infanta Maria Theresa' by Velazquez will be remembered as one of the most popular pictures in the Exhibition

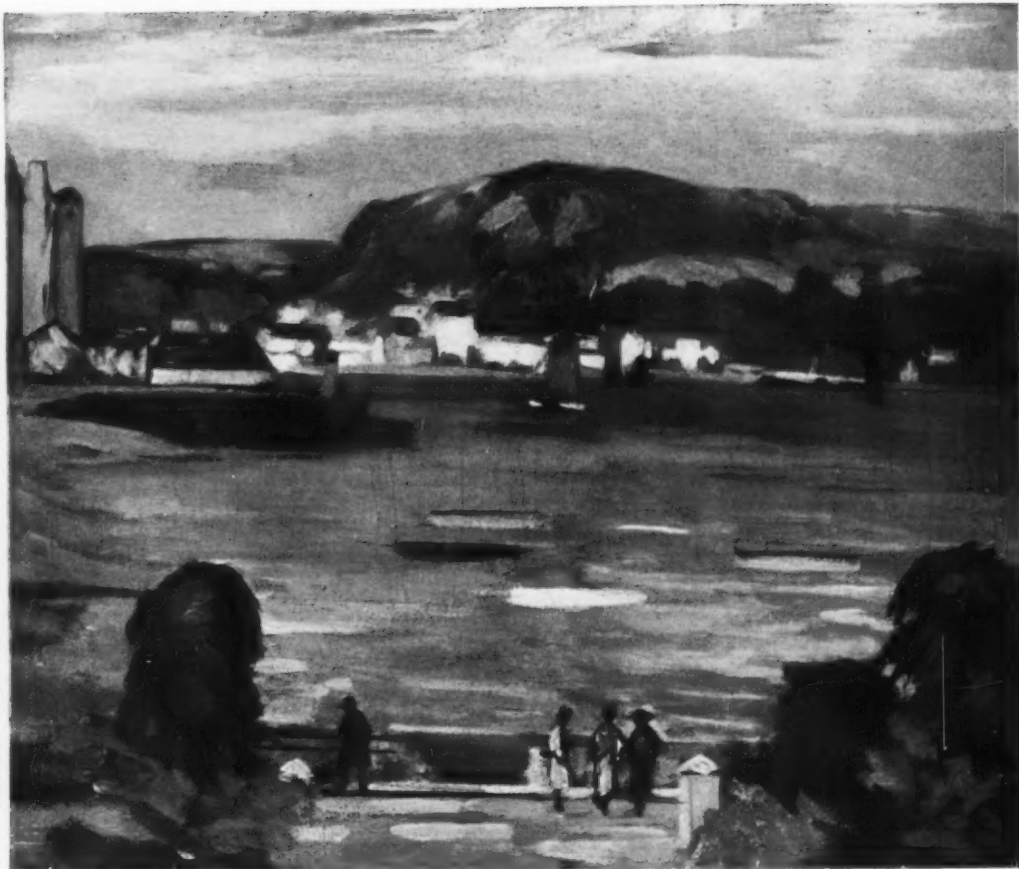
(Continued on page 25)



A. A. MCGLASHAN, R.S.A.

CHILD IN PRAM
Oil on canvas, 18 x 18 ins.

The above picture is from a Private Collection and demonstrates an earlier period of the artist's work when he achieved a considerable reputation as a painter of children. Mr. McGlashan studied at the Glasgow School of Art and abroad.



W. Y. MACGREGOR, R.S.A.

OBAN
Oil on canvas, 26 x 30 ins.

It is generally agreed that W. Y. Macgregor (1855-1923) was the chief originator of the Glasgow School of Painting. The group pledged themselves to cut out all prettiness, sentimentality and anecdote and endeavoured to give fuller scope to purely pictorial values. Painted 1902.



WILLIAM MACTAGGART, R.S.A.

LOCH-AN-EILAN
Oil on canvas, 22 x 28 ins.

William MacTaggart is a grandson of the Scots Impressionist. He is among the more 'national' of the younger artists. His delight in the handling of paint is matched by a confidence in its use. Painted 1942.



EDOUARD VUILLARD

LA MÈRE ET L'ENFANT
Oil on panel, 20 x 23 ins.

One of nineteen pictures recently presented to the Glasgow Art Gallery by Sir John Richmond,
K.B.E., LL.D.

of the Burrell Collection. The first reaction of visitors was usually expressed in the phrase, 'How charming.' But there is more to it than that. Aline B. Louchheim, the writer of the American article, describes the Portraits of the Infantas by Velazquez as the most brilliant and most tragic records of the royal child. 'He (Velazquez) preserved for ever the fragile bodies of the little Infantes and Infantas, clothed in robes as stiff as armatures, their pale faces grave with the strain of confined and arduous lives.' When the Burrell Collection is again on view in the McLellan Galleries throughout the summer, visitors will have an opportunity of re-examining the picture. Meantime, it is hoped that some of the pictures here reproduced will lead us to look a little deeper into the paintings—beyond the subject to the pictorial values. Some biographical notes on the artists and an analytical hint or two may help the process.

Santvoort (1610-1680) was the favourite painter of the upper classes of Amsterdam, and in his day received infinitely more com-



DIRCK SANTVOORT 'PORTRAIT OF A GIRL'
Oil on panel, 26 x 20 ins.



E. A. HORNEL

GATHERING SNOWDROPS
Oil on canvas, 24 x 24 ins.

missions for portraits than his great contemporary, Rembrandt. In his 'Portrait of a Girl' he has captured the shyness and curiosity of youth. The grandeur of the dress is rendered, almost photographically, so that it is possible to compare the different patterns of the lace on her sleeves and head-dress. Yet it has not become the main theme of the picture. The curve of the head-dress has a contrasting curve in the ruff. The horizontal line pattern of the gold embroidery of her left sleeve not only defines the arm, and acts as a contrast to the dark background, but leads the eye to the gold chain hanging from her waist which in turn accentuates

the V-shaped bodice of her dress, emphasises the slenderness of her body, and so becomes part of the design of the picture.

In contrast to this dignified portrait is the Hals' 'Head of a Boy'—one of a pair in the collection. Frans Hals (1580?–1666) did not start his famous studies of laughing children until he was 45. The subjects for his characterisation he found—not among the children of the upper class—but in the streets of Haarlem. The 'Head of a Boy' is no 'posed' portrait. There is the feeling of the child being caught only for a second. The miniature-like painting of the face of the Santvoort portrait should be compared with Hals' broad treatment, where the infinitely varied brush-strokes are clearly visible, and give a rich spontaneity to the picture, while the circular shape of the panel corresponds with the line of the face and hair. Frans Hals has captured, not only the character of the individual child, but has shown the uni-



VELAZQUEZ

PORTRAIT OF THE INFANTA MARIA THERESA
Oil on canvas, 25½ × 21 ins.



JOHANN ZOFFANY, R.A.

A FAMILY PARTY—THE MINUET
Oil on canvas, 39 × 49 ins.

versal mischievous boy. Further points of interest will emerge if one compares these two pictures with others in the same gallery—the differences in style, for example, which characterise the work of artists who lived and worked in Holland about the same time.

Johann Zoffany (1733–1810) was a Bavarian, who studied in Rome, before settling in England. He distinguished himself as a painter of 'Conversation Pieces'—a form of group portraiture much in favour during the eighteenth century. Here we have



LE NAIN

PEASANT CHILDREN
Oil on panel, 8½ x 10 ins.

a family party where the children practise the steps of the Minuet. Although one is aware that the children do not dance, but adopt graceful poses, Zoffany has succeeded in showing—if not the character—at least a characteristic mood of each of the group, for example, the pensiveness of the girl and the seriousness of the boy. The outstretched arm of the girl links her figure with that of the boy, while the red tone of the boy's coat is repeated in the girl's frock, but is delicately subdued by the muslin over-dress. Colour and line are manipulated to give harmony and unity.

Another example of group portraiture is the Le Nain Panel from the Burrell Collection. Little is known of the French brothers Le Nain (Antoine, Louis and Mathieu) and there is the greatest difficulty in distinguishing the individual qualities in their work. Antoine, the eldest, was born in 1588. It is known that the brothers received their early training from a foreign master, and it is believed that he was either Dutch or closely associated with the Dutch School. By 1630

all three were established in a studio in Paris, and probably worked in collaboration until the death of Antoine and Louis in 1648. The Le Nain brothers found their inspiration among the peasants. The panel, here reproduced, which is actually very small, has nothing of the 'grand manner' about it. Apart from its success, or otherwise, in depicting stolid, unsophisticated peasant children, it gives a delightful, pleasing effect of beautifully balanced colour.

Archibald McGlashan and James Cowie are two contemporary Scottish artists. The former has been known for a number of years as a painter of children. His approach to the theme is comparable to that of Hals, but the Italian and Spanish Masters have exercised a fine influence in the use of colour. Cowie is acknowledged as among Scotland's great draughtsmen. Chiefly concerned with the element of design in picture-making, his technical procedure reveals a sense of care and deliberation which characterises all great productions. It might be said that

McGlashan's bias is towards romanticism and Cowie's towards classicism.

E. A. Hornel (1864-1933) was born in Australia, but came to Britain in 1866. He studied art at the Trustees' Academy, Edinburgh, and later identified himself with the Glasgow School of Painters. He travelled extensively, visiting Japan, Ceylon and Australia, but made his home at Kirkcudbright. Hornel for a period favoured large canvases and latterly limited his range to a degree which became monotonous. It is interesting to examine his methods in handling paint to give a mosaic-like effect. His children, standardised to function more as symbols than as individuals, are all subjected to the general purposes of a pattern. Decoration would seem to be the main idea in the artist's mind and while it will be freely conceded that children

are the supreme decorations in family life, there is something more to them than that.

Take the painting by Corbet, for instance. Philip Corbet is not by any means a well-known painter. He represents the so-called sentimental phase of the early nineteenth century. This is a picture of his own daughter, used as a model to illustrate an idea, 'Going to Chapel'. Disregarding the query as to whether the intention was accidental or deliberate (that is—did he select certain features for emphasis?) this portrait is valuable for pictorial elements which are apt to be lost in the sweetly sentimental expression. For example, the forehead curls, the eyes and the cloak fastening, are part of a visual rhythm, and the pigtails help to give poise and equilibrium. Similarly, the lines of the cloak, contrasting with the thrust of the

Bible in the hand, are all complementary to the general scheme. But does the emphasis rest more on the original conception or on what emerged in the effort to express it pictorially? By way of comparison, examine the colour reproduction of the painting by Vuillard (1868-1940). The room is crowded with objects. The patterns of wall-paper, screen, bed and furnishings might appear, at first glance, to be in conflict. Yet out of it there emerges a rich pictorial unity.

Now this kind of analysis is perhaps disturbing to the average spectator but taken as a mental exercise it brings one more closely into contact with the real function of painting. Moreover, if we remember that an analytical approach should be followed by a synthesis, the 'loose ends' will not be left in the air.

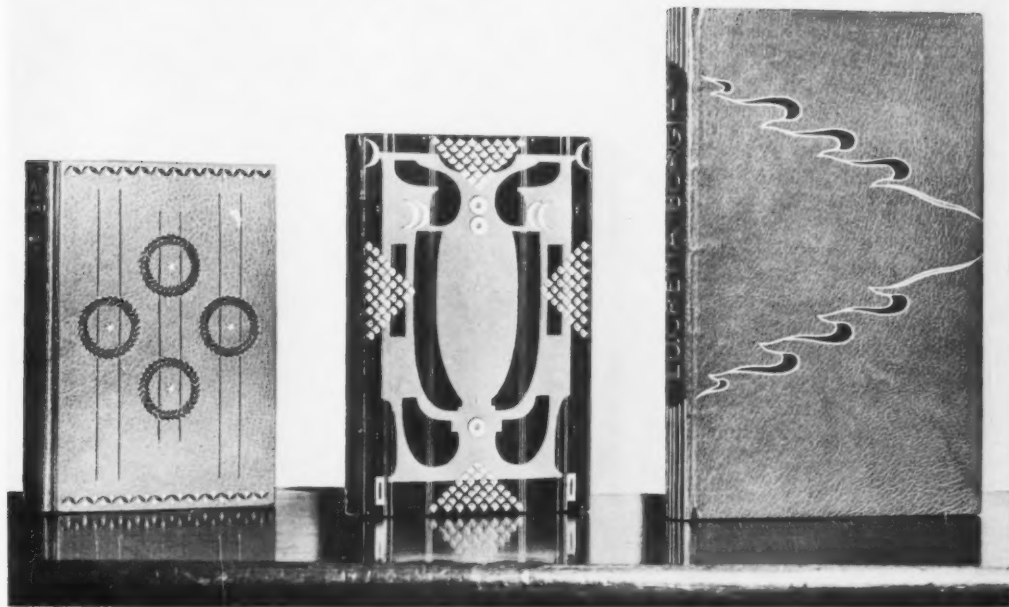
In any event, the paintings always remain unharmed and the children do not grow up.



PHILIP CORBET

GOING TO CHAPEL.
Oil on panel, 17 x 19 1/2 ins.

Three Modern Bindings



THE small collection of decorated bindings by contemporary British artists that is being formed in the National Library of Scotland had as its nucleus a gift of Major J. R. Abbey, of Wyvis Forest, Inverness-shire. This is the volume shown in the centre of the illustration—a specially-printed copy of T. Sturge Moore's *Mystery and Tragedy* covered in brownish-black inlaid with undyed morocco. The binder, Miss Sybil Pye, has kindly sent me a note regarding her method. 'My design' she writes 'is worked out in very soft chalks and charcoal; but I also cut out the larger "tools" in stiff gold paper and move them about till the proportions please the eye; and I use gold silk thread to decide the placing of the lines. The method of inlaying employed is to cut out the foundation leather and to replace it by other colour or colours.' Miss Pye has pointed out elsewhere (in the catalogue of Major Abbey's collection) that in this way no line is required

to hide the join, and the gold ornament can be kept independent of the colour design: 'to ensure that there should be no shrinkage of the inlays, they are cut slightly larger than the space they are to fill, and gently forced into it.' Miss Pye is one of the most original binders working at present. She has a very highly developed sense of the quality of colour and surface in the leathers that she uses, and the perfection of her inlaying is all the more remarkable when it is considered that, without regular instruction, she learnt her craft from Douglas Cockerell's *Book-binding and the Care of Books*.

Of the artists whose work is best known from recent Arts and Crafts Society Exhibitions, Mr. William Matthews and Miss Elizabeth Chase are those invited so far to contribute examples to the collection. Miss Chase's binding is reproduced on the left of the illustration. It is of orange morocco blind-tooled, two delightful features being the top-

edge of green ornamented with gold stars and dots and the marbled end-papers designed by Douglas Cockerell. Miss Chase is a pupil of Mr. Roger Powell, who was a partner of Cockerell.

Each of these two bindings was executed by its designer. The remaining book is the result of a collaboration between a designer and the craftsmen of a firm. Towards the end of last century, when Cockerell left Cobden-Sanderson's Doves bindery and established his own, he had two pupils, Francis Sangorski and George Sutcliffe. They in turn formed a partnership, and Mr. Kenneth Hobson of that firm has designed for the Library a binding of brown morocco with an unconventional free-hand design in gold inlaid with green and red, the back having a very original arrangement of lines and lettering. Imaginative bindings such as this are being produced and much prized in France, but Mr. Hobson has broken new ground so far as this country is concerned, and his present design, showing so complete a grasp of the art of book-construction and so sure an instinct for the exercise of both boldness and restraint, promises a brilliant future for English binding, provided that work of this quality receives adequate encouragement.

But it is doubtful whether in recent times in this country it ever has. When, on a Sunday in June 1883, Mrs. William Morris suggested to T. J. Cobden-Sanderson that he should learn binding, she inspired the English revival of an art that had become a mechanic occupation. But whereas printing, the other book-art influenced by the Kelmscott group, has been reformed at almost every level by that influence, so that the 'common reader' to-day, as much as the collector of fine editions, has the benefit of the change, the same has not been true of binding. Of course, there are exceptions. I have just picked out of my book-case a copy of A. H. Bullen's second edition of *England's Helicon* (1899) whose trade-binding with its 'all-over' gold design of sprays and blossoms reveals the influence of Cobden-Sanderson. A little later the green cloth of the Vale Shakespeare was to make known to a wider circle than thitherto Charles Ricketts's subtle understanding of the ar-

rangement and spacing of linear ornament. Nearer our own time Sturge Moore has designed symbolical bindings for the ordinary editions of Yeats's *The Tower* (1928) and *Last Poems and Plays* (1940). But, to set against these and their like, a handful at most, there are all the dull, repetitive, often downright bad bindings of the average publisher, and in America, if this brings consolation to anyone, the position appears to me to be even worse. Not so in Paris, where houses such as Gallimard commission designs for trade-bindings from the great French binder, Paul Bonet, whose sumptuous work would otherwise never be seen except by wealthy collectors or by visitors to occasional exhibitions (such as that of French books recently organised by Mr. Desmond Flower for the National Book League). In Britain the ephemeral book-jacket has money lavished on it, illustrators have come into their own, and the revival of typography has produced such a plethora of founts and ornaments that no printer could afford to use more than a fraction of them. Will some one of our publishers consider following the Parisian lead and enlivening the permanent covers of his books with designs by artists such as those mentioned here?

A sure sensibility in visual art is at least as rare as a good ear for music. No one imagines that all are equally capable of judging music, or that a perfect ear can be acquired by study; only fools imagine that the power of nice discrimination in other arts is not a peculiar gift. Nevertheless, there is no reason why the vast majority should not become very much more sensitive to art than it is; the ear can be trained to a point. But for the better appreciation, as for the freer creation, of art more liberty is needed. Ninety-nine out of every hundred people who visit picture galleries need to be delivered from that 'museum atmosphere' which envelops works of art and asphyxiates beholders. They, the ninety-nine, should be encouraged to approach works of art courageously and to judge them on their merits. Often they are more sensitive to form and colour than they suppose.

CLIVE BELL

Some of you may say, can we be taught to enjoy? We either do so or we do not. That is a great mistake. In nothing does one need more careful and prolonged discipline than in learning to discriminate between the good and the inferior in every line of experience, from art and literature to, shall I say, wines and cigars. Joy is the final test and reward of achievement in every activity.

SIR HERBERT GRIERSON

Children's Art Competition

In the annual report of the Gallery for the year 1904 there appears the following entry: 'A novel feature in the activity of the Museums and Galleries Committee this year was the organisation of a competition in the drawing of Natural History objects by school children . . . the main aims of the committee being to interest young persons in the contents of the Museum, and to induce them to observe the objects with care.' The next year, the choice of subject was extended to 'specimens in any section'. This was quite in line with art teaching at that time, when carefully executed pencil drawings were the aim of every teacher, if not of every child.

It was not until 1941 that any radical change was made. In that year the organisation of the competition was taken over by the newly constituted Schools Museum Service, and it was considered a suitable time to revise the whole scheme. Accordingly greater freedom of method was given. The youngsters were permitted to add imaginative backgrounds to the objects drawn. There was an increasing use of colour. Also, instead of



DRAWING FROM SCULPTURE

(GIRL, AGE 16)



FARM HORSES

(BOY, AGE 18)

making isolated visits to the Gallery, children now came in organised school parties, frequently on week days, and to galleries specially laid out for their use. There was an immediate large increase in the number of entries, and while one must recognise the possibility of mixed motives, there was also undoubtedly great enjoyment in this communal working.

The year 1945 saw a further innovation, the introduction of subjects for figure composition. This

move had become inevitable. In spite of a traditional Scottish love of 'good, tight drawing', the work of such great child lovers as Professor Cizek of Vienna and Marion Richardson of London had found favour in the eyes of some art teachers. Nor had it escaped the notice of educationists that Arthur Lismer of Toronto had had remarkable success in art education. It was felt that the time had come to recognise the fact that a new type of art teaching had been established. This new approach was based on the individual needs of the child, and was designed to develop his emotional and spiritual life.

Nevertheless, there followed inevitable criticism. Careful observation proved, however, that many of the youngsters toured the gallery with great interest on completion of their work. The gap between the original purpose of the scheme, and the modern interpretation of it, was not so wide as would appear. The very fact of working in a great gallery such as this, leaves an impression on the pliable minds of the young. This has been proved by the reactions of a group of fifty children who come to paint at their own request, on Saturday mornings. One girl who applied for membership of the class stated categorically that she wished to work here, and refused to be directed to another institution.

After all 'The proof of the pudding is the preein' o't.' In 1941, 2,368 children entered for the competition. In 1948, the number rose to 7,938. The co-operation of the teachers has been one factor accounting for the great increase, but the greatest credit must go to the wider appeal of the competition itself. Nor is there any restriction placed on the child who wishes to work objectively. The animals, objets d'art, and pieces of sculpture are still there for those who wish to use them.

One feature of the new approach has been the appeal that colour exercises. In 1943 the number of children who used colour in preference to pencil was 1,457. By 1948 that number had risen to 5,088. Figure compositions are on the increase also. The total of 750 in the first year of subjective work has been more than doubled this year.

The children have made their decision.

LIMITATIONS of space have crowded out a number of reviews. Pending their appearance, we think it is at least our duty to authors and publishers to draw the attention of our readers to some notable works which have recently appeared:

ART

The Flemish Primitives, by Leo Van Puyvelde (Collins). 3 guineas. (Essential for students and libraries.)

Masterpieces of the Prado Museum. With an introduction by Fernando Alvarez de Sotomayor (Faber & Faber, Ltd.) 35/-. (Edition in English of internationally known publication.)

William James Muller, by Cyril G. E. Bunt (F. Lewis Publishers Ltd.). £5 5s. Limited edition of a lesser-known English artist, a pupil of David Cox. Well catalogued.

Renoir. With an introduction by R. H. Wilenski (Faber Gallery Series). 7/6, and

Homage to Venus. With an introduction by James Laver (Faber Gallery Series). 7/6.

Two fine additions to a famous series which has now reached a total of twenty-four.

Mughal Painting. With an introduction by J. V. S. Wilkinson, and

Rajput Painting. With an introduction by Basil Gray.

The first two volumes in a new series. (The Faber Gallery of Oriental Art). 8/6 each. Both well up to the Faber standard.

Oskar Kokoschka. Introduction by James Plaut (Max Parrish & Co. Ltd.). 15/-. (A limited edition will also be published at two guineas. In this, two original lithographs will be signed by the artist.) Excellent introduction to an important 'Modern'.

Paul Klee on Modern Art. With an introduction by Herbert Read (Faber & Faber). 8/6. A fascinating essay on Art by a great artist.

ART FOR CHILDREN

The Story of Painting, by Agnes Allen (Faber & Faber Ltd.). 12/6. An informal talk on painting for young children.

POTTERY

Style in Pottery, by Arthur Lane (Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press). 6/-.

Medieval English Pottery, by Bernard Rackham (Faber & Faber, Ltd.). 21/-.

Art in Scotland

NOT the least important thing about Mr. Finlay's book is the fact that he has written it. In the preface he states the purpose of it as 'to piece together the significant trends, the *Scottish* trends, of art in Scotland', and in his last page he argues, 'But there is a great work of education to do before the people begin to realise what is happening among them.'

Now, because there is no other book on Scottish Art quite like this one, and because it is written in an easy, convincing style, it is especially welcome. The crafts and arts, the history, the revolutions, the movements, the reformations are all woven into a pattern which never becomes complicated, wearying neither the eye nor the mind. And implicit in the unfolding narrative is an indictment of our scholars and historians. For example, Mr. Finlay stresses the fact that the Declaration of Arbroath reflects the spirit of Scotland and that the document is rarely mentioned in the standard histories. We have heard educationists of experience and men and women who have no political axe to grind, deplore the inadequate historical material given to them for the purpose of ordinary education. It is known that the material is there but it would appear to be reserved for the peculiar delight of the interested few with access to the records. We shall have to change all that.

It may be that here and there Mr. Finlay's work cannot withstand the searching analysis of the expert historian. His opinion on certain art trends and on the significance of some Scots artists are at variance with those of the present reviewer. But what matter! He has performed a great service in re-stating a case for the much-neglected methods of visual education. And if a writer creates in us the urge to see for ourselves, if he refreshes our memories and opens doors to fresh experiences, his performance is complete enough for most of us.

That there is a revival of interest in Scottish letters is common knowledge. The stimulating effect of this may soon become apparent in the field of visual arts. As a preliminary it seems necessary to insist that a knowledge of the names of the artists, some familiarity with their work, and the institutions where these may be inspected is essential. To accept *Art in Scotland* as merely a piece of national publicity would be to do a grave disservice to its author. The intrinsic merit lies in the evidence of long research by a writer who has elevated his theme to a high level of interest and importance, and who possesses the enviable knack of communicating what he has to say with enthusiasm and conviction.

Art in Scotland, by Ian Finlay (Oxford University Press; 15/- net).

Sculpture

I welcome Alec Miller's book, *Stone and Marble Carving*, a manual packed with information and practical advice from a lifetime's experience. It should smooth out all difficulties and problems of carving for the student and help the professional sculptor also.

Mr. Miller treats his subject with a humility and reverence for his material to be admired, and had I to learn the craft of carving now I could want for no better book by my side.

It is well illustrated with drawings and diagrams of tools and methods, and with photographs of actual works in progressive stages of completion. Stress is laid on design and the appreciation of form. The language is always simple and to the point.

Mr. Richard Garbe, R.A., provides an erudite foreword and an important chapter on pointing.

Stone and Marble Carving, by Alec Miller (Alec Tiranti, London; 12/6 net). B.S.

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BURRELL COLLECTION EXHIBITION

SOME years must elapse before a new Gallery to house the Burrell Collection can be built. In the meantime more and more people have expressed their keen desire to see something of the Tapestries, the Stained Glass, the Furniture, the Needlework, the Pictures, and many other objects in the Collection. The Art Galleries and Museums Committee of the Corporation is strongly in favour of showing, rather than storing its treasures, and Sir William Burrell has offered enthusiastic and practical support. He has waived for the occasion his condition regarding the showing of textiles in the city area. He is willing, for a very appreciable time, to do without the particular Tapestries, Furniture, and Carpets which form the background of his own home. The Exhibition is planned for the McLellan Galleries, from mid-June until mid-September, 1949. The earlier Exhibition in 1946 had to make use of readily available material, and to show it in Galleries and cases still suffering from war damage. Now, with a more adequate setting, we shall draw upon the full resources of the Collection. There should be colour, texture, shapeliness, and spiritual content from a variety of great civilisations, and expressed in a variety of artistic media—wood, stone, textiles, pottery, porcelain, glass, metals, and paint. Most people will want a season ticket!

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

WILLIAM BEATTIE, M.A. Attended Jedburgh Grammar School, George Watson's and Edinburgh University. Assistant, Edinburgh University Library, 1926-30. Keeper of Printed Books in the National Library of Scotland since 1931. Has contributed articles, especially concerning books of the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, to *Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions*, of which he is Hon. Editor.

IAIN PAUL. Born in the Manse at Coldstream, but spent much of his life in the north and was bilingual (English-Gaelic) until the age of ten. Since then has lived in Glasgow, Ayrshire, the West Highlands and Edinburgh. He is a graduate of two Scottish universities and subsequent research has included an intensive study of all aspects of the Isle of Iona and the life of St. Columba. He has been associated with the Saltire Society since its early years; has been on its Council since 1945; and is author of the Saltire booklet 'Scottish Pottery'. He is Secretary for Publicity in the National Trust for Scotland.

ALEC STURROCK, M.A. (St. Andrews), is on the editorial staff of *The Glasgow Herald*, and has been the paper's art critic since 1939, except for a period of war-time service in Britain and South-East Asia. He has written and broadcast regularly on aspects of Scottish art. Has also written radio sketches, short stories, and general criticism. Is a nephew of A. R. Sturrock, R.S.A., the Edinburgh painter.

WALTER CYRIL WALLIS. Educated privately. Art training at Croydon School of Art and in Paris. Served with Artists' Rifles (28th London Regt.) in World War I. Appointed Assistant Keeper, Art and Ethnographical Dept., Royal Scottish Museum, 1920. Made special study of Textiles, Ceramics, and Glass and has lectured on and contributed articles on these subjects. Largely responsible for the arrangement and cataloguing of specimens in Exhibitions of Chinese Art, Edinburgh and Glasgow, 1944, and of Rare Embroidery and Old Lace, Edinburgh, 1948. One-man show of Lithographs in Edinburgh, 1922. Occasional Exhibitor R.S.A. and R.S.W. Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. Librarian of the Scottish Anthropological and Folklore Society.

JEAN IRWIN is a graduate of Glasgow School of Art, where she specialised in painting. For a number of years she taught art in Glasgow schools with the additional experience of a year in a technical school in Australia.

Since 1945 she has been a member of the Schools Museums Service at Kelvingrove. Her main outside interest is in the theatre, and she has considerable knowledge of designing and making theatre costume and decor. A number of articles by Miss Irwin have appeared in educational magazines.



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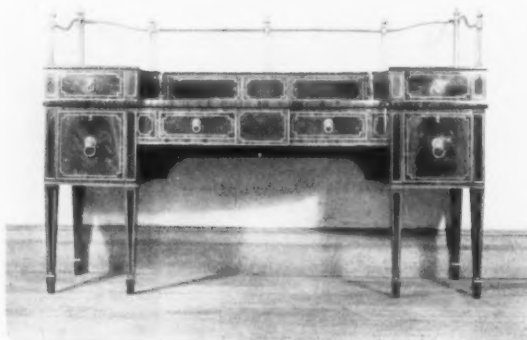
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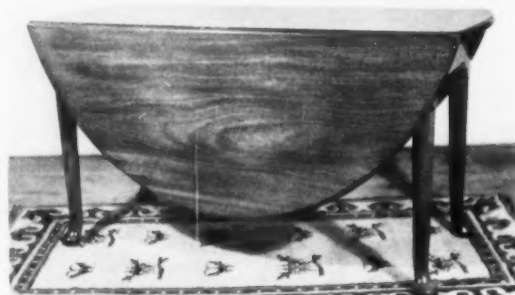
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